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Mrs Jackie King and Mrs Pip O'Connor
Co-Headteachers
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Dear Mrs King and Mrs O'Connor

Short inspection of St Ann's Heath Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 7 March 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in April 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

As co-headteachers you make an impressive and effective team. Your skills and knowledge complement each other very well. You are determined and focused on improving the school for the benefit of all pupils. Together with other leaders and staff, you have built a strong community ethos that pupils and adults value highly. This school is very well regarded by parents, with one commenting for others, 'I wish they could open a secondary school.'

You have accurately identified the most appropriate priorities to develop the school further. The school is improving quickly. Your work to develop the curriculum has been particularly effective in engaging pupils in their learning. Pupils truly enjoy their lessons. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils were fully engaged in a discussion about the parts of Viking boats in order to produce an informative piece of writing explaining the boat's role in Viking culture. Pupils in Year 3 enjoyed writing letters, as the character 'Flat Stanley', purposefully discussing the items of luggage he could take on a trip to Egypt.

Physical education provision is a strength of the curriculum. Pupils develop their physical fitness well. They learn how to play together successfully in teams. Morning clubs, such as dodgeball and cross-country running, are highly valued by pupils and very well attended, as are other after-school sports clubs.

You have recently changed the ways that teachers check pupils' progress in subjects. You recognise that there is still some work needed to ensure that the information collected by teachers is used consistently well to plan the most appropriate next steps in learning for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported to make progress to appropriate targets. However, sometimes the learning activities planned for pupils with SEND do not fully match pupils' needs. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not make as much progress as they could.

Governors are very well informed and knowledgeable. Governors support as well as challenge leaders effectively. They visit the school often to check with leaders the progress made towards achieving the school's priorities. Governors take bold decisions. For example, they made a confident decision to appoint co-headteachers, because they knew it was the right decision for the school. They listen to feedback from parents and pupils regularly and share their findings with leaders to support further school improvement. Governors fulfil their legal responsibilities dutifully.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. There is a strong ethos and culture of safeguarding across the school. Staff are well trained and informed of their legal responsibilities around keeping children safe in education. Your procedures to recruit staff follow the correct safer recruitment processes. Governors check that school safeguarding processes remain effective. They are well trained and use their skills wisely.

All staff know how to report any safeguarding concerns that they have to appropriate leaders. They know the issues will be dealt with swiftly. You are determined to do the right thing for vulnerable pupils and their families. You have made staffing changes to ensure that your provision to support these children and their families is further strengthened. You work well with other agencies to organise and secure extra support for pupils and families if needed. Consequently, vulnerable pupils and families are very well supported.

Pupils feel safe at school. If they have any concerns they know there is someone to talk to. You have recently implemented restorative practices to further develop the good relationships that pupils have with each other. Parents feel that their children are very safe in school. Most parents who completed the Ofsted online parent survey would recommend the school. One parent commented on behalf of many by saying, 'My children thrive here.'

Inspection findings

- Leaders are very well informed and knowledgeable about the needs of pupils with SEND. They meet regularly to review the provision in place for these pupils. Leaders have an accurate overview of the impact of the provision and its suitability. As a result, most pupils with SEND make good progress. Teaching assistants work effectively with the pupils. They are well trained and use their

skills ably to support pupils' needs. For example, phonics support is effective, and pupils improve their phonics skills and reading well. Leaders use well-considered external agencies to support pupils' language needs. Staff work closely with parents to ensure that they are well informed of the progress that their children make. Some teaching, however, does not match the needs of pupils with SEND. As a result, some of these pupils do not make consistently strong progress towards their targets.

- Your work to develop the writing skills of pupils is very effective. The use of key topics to teach writing, in all year groups, is working very well. Teachers plan stimulating writing activities based around well-chosen texts. Pupils actively write about these exciting and engaging topics. Consequently, classes are purposeful and calm places of learning. Most pupils' writing skills improve quickly. Leaders are in the early stages of developing a strategy to accelerate progress in writing. Teaching does not always build upon what the pupils know and understand about writing better. Parents are very supportive of this change to the curriculum. Many parents told the inspector how their children enjoy writing about the topics that they learn.
- Leaders' work to improve pupils' outcomes in mathematics is very effective. Pupils use their mathematical reasoning skills well to solve challenging mathematical problems, especially the most able pupils. Pupils are making strong progress in mathematics.
- Leaders have effectively maintained the strengths noted in the previous Ofsted inspection report. Pupils' relationships with teachers and each other are polite and respectful. Pupils are tolerant of others' differences. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding. Pupils particularly enjoy their regular reflective 'check-in, check-up and check-out' sessions, where they share their thoughts about the week with each other and their teachers.
- Leaders have developed a curriculum that is effectively improving the rates of pupils' learning. Pupils eagerly told the inspector how they learned about animals, such as the coatimundi of South America, how mountains form, the enjoyment of cycling across high mountain ranges, and the afterlife in Greece.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching consistently identifies the most appropriate next steps in learning for all groups of pupils, so that all pupils make even faster rates of progress
- teaching is always planned to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Surrey. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Dylan Davies
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspector met with the co-headteachers. He observed teaching in all year groups with both co-headteachers, in most classes. The inspector looked at work in several books and discussed pupils' progress and attainment with the co-headteachers and middle leaders. During the inspection, he spoke to pupils informally in lessons and around the school. The inspector met with the inclusion manager. He also met with groups of pupils and looked at their books with them. The inspector considered 158 Ofsted online survey responses submitted by pupils, as well as 69 parents' views, completed on the Ofsted Parent View survey. The inspector also considered 66 free-text parent comments and spoke with parents at the start of the school day. The inspector also took account of 25 survey responses submitted by staff. The inspector met with a group of governors. Records and documentation relating to safeguarding, school monitoring and improvement were considered by the inspector. The inspector reviewed the checks made on staff about their suitability to work with children. He met with a representative of the local authority.